

Fourth Avenue United
Methodist Church
219 Fourth Ave. NW
Faribault, MN 55021
507-334-4308

August Fourth Teller

August 2022

A Time to Renew My/Our Commitments

.... as for me and my family,
we will serve the Lord."

-Joshua 24:15



Dear Fourth Avenue UMC Friends,

We have survived three years of whiplash! Let me explain. When I think about the last three years, I see three major crises have collided to disrupt our church's life and relationships with each other.

First, our *denominational* stress. The United Methodist Church's long-standing contentious debates about theology, and in particular, the issue of human sexuality was not satisfactorily resolved by the specially called General Conference 2019. Now, the prospect of a denominational divide has caused angst among members of our church family. People we know well and love deeply simply have different views.

Second, *the pandemic and its aftershocks*. The Covid crisis made it impossible to worship together and gather socially in person and put distance into our relationships with each other. The longer the crisis lingered, the more our faith in God took a hit and our bond with each other loosened. Our spiritual muscles have atrophied, and it requires a significant effort to get back into shape spiritually and relationally.

Third, *as your pastor I suffered a personal crisis*. Beginning in the fall of 2019, my personal life was turned upside down as I experienced a failing marriage and a divorce. I felt like I was treading water to stay afloat. My personal grief over the situation negatively impacted my passion, sapped my energy for ministry and diminished the relational bond between the church family and myself. I simply had to pull away to seek healing for myself. I will always be grateful for the way that you stuck by me and showed your support.

In addition to these three factors, there were many events, issues and forces in our country making the whole situation worse. It was the perfect storm, but we leaned into our faith and the Lord has seen us through.

We are survivors! God has sustained us through this incredibly challenging season and we are coming back. The Church is now fully open and there is life and well-being among us. There is joy in the house as we gather to worship, reconnect with each other and welcome newcomers into our midst. The cobwebs in our faith are clearing and a breath of new life is animating our body. The specter of Covid lingers in the background, yet it no longer is the dominating concern. Our attendance continues to rise and is getting stronger.

My personal sadness has given way to great joy and contentment with my courtship and marriage to Rebekah. She has brought new life to me and the church with her infectious personality, personable nature and the ministry she offers. Recently, the Church Council made the decision to put a pause on any discussion about our church's trajectory with regards to the denominational divide so that we can unite, grow in faith, deepen our bonds as a family in Christ, embrace the newness of life God is bringing and learn new skills, try new things and pray big bold prayers. God is with us and for us and has promised a future with hope as we daily lift up in our church's Breakthrough Prayer.

And so, we stand at a crossroads. I/we have a choice to make. To lean into our common faith and move forward in confidence and optimism or shrink back in fear and discouragement. When I arrived in 2017, I believed the remainder of my ministry would be here among you. Now, in 2022, with fresh eyes, I see my life in Faribault for a long time. I am renewing my commitment to serve among you as pastor for the foreseeable future. I am committing myself to be a pastor to our entire church family regardless of our differing viewpoints. And I am committing myself to do my part to rebuild our pastor/people bond. And I invite you to commit yourself anew to God, to me and to one another. I believe God will bless this commitment. I believe *the time is now* to pray for a stronger future and work together to build a vibrant Christian community.

By God's grace, we have survived. By God's grace, we will thrive.

For a new day, I am sincerely yours,

Pastor Greg

Thank You from the Ciesluks

We want to thank our entire church family for the multitude of expressions of love and support during our courtship and our blessed wedding day on June 11. We felt so surrounded by the love of so many people on that day. We were very proud to hold our wedding celebration in our magnificently beautiful church and to invite our family and friends and community members into this beautiful and historic building. Faribault is now our hometown, and this church is our church family.

Thank you for your gifts, cards, and prayers. Thank you for all who put on the beautiful reception in our church's Fellowship Hall for all our guests. Most of all, thank you for your presence on our blessed wedding day. We felt your love deeply and it means all the world to us.

Pastor Greg & Rebekah Ciesluk

Prayer Chain



We're always looking for people willing to join us in our ministry of intercession, especially in moments of crisis. When a need becomes known, email alerts are sent out and people pray. What a difference our prayers make!

To join the growing ranks of Fourth Avenue UMC's prayer chain, send an email to our Coordinator, **Carole Evans** at (caroleannjean@gmail.com) and request to join.

There are individuals on the prayer chain that do not have email. Please know you can still be an important part of this group by communicating the news to others via a phone conversation.

Contact Carole Evans at 507-210-6971.



Dear Fourth Avenue Family,
Thank you so much for the generous scholarship. I appreciate the support everyone has given me along my education journey and am looking forward to my further studies at Hamline.

-Chloe Kucera ☺

Calendar of Events

August 02 ~ Ad Council, 6:30 pm in Parlor *NOTE: Change of Date

August 04 ~ Trustees, 6:30 pm in Parlor

Operation 23 to Zero, 7:00 pm in Library

August 05 ~ Relay for Life, 6:00 pm Opening Ceremony RC Fairgrounds

August 06 ~ Jesus Food, 10:00 to 12:00 noon at Faribo West Mall

August 07 ~ Nicholas Sonpon Preaching

August 11 ~ UWF Salad Luncheon, 1:00 pm at Carolyn Minshall's home

August 18 ~ Piecemakers in Fellowship Hall, 7:00 pm

August 21 ~ R.E.M. - Liberia, Breakfast Fundraiser 10:15 to noon FH

August 23 ~ Finance 2:45 pm in Parlor *NOTE: Change of Date

August 23 ~ SPRC 6:30 PM in Parlor

August 25 ~ Nursing Home Worship

10:00 am The Emeralds

10:45 am New Perspectives Senior Living

August 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29 ~ Lakelanders Practice 7:00 pm in FH

Just a heads up ~ Choir practice will be starting in September

Instructions for Online Giving

Steps to set up an online giving account through VANCO:

1. Go to giving page: www.fourthaveumc.org
2. Select 'Sign Up' in the upper right of the giving page
3. Enter your first and last name, along with your email and a password for future access.
4. Check your email for your VANCO profile confirmation code.
5. Enter the code within designated field to confirm your email and complete your sign up

Video Walk Thru: <https://share.vidyard.com/watch/Jy7ZGhKQQDERE9vkrKcN4R>

PLEASE NOTE:

See page 9 of this Fourth Teller for another way to sign up through Vanco.

Additional hand outs will be coming with written instructions to make this easier.

August Birthdays

Robert Ford	04
Shari VanDerVeen	05
Ron Landsverk	07
Shawn Steele	14
Jake Kandakai	19
Kim Bossmann	21
Phyllis Wegner	21
Gideon Goebel	21
Aubrey Hatfield	27
Elizabeth Prange	27
Leon Dibble	28
Bernice Beardshear	31
September Birthdays	
Stephanie Hagberg	04



August Anniversaries

Mike & Marcia Grundman	09
Chris & Julie Schiffer	10
Shawn & Sara Steele	14
Russell & JoEllen Schulz	19
Tom & Kim Bossmann	22
Don & Cheryl Kleeberger	27
Joe & Deb Mueller	28



August Worship Servers

Ushers

August 07 ~ Dave & Carolyn Hanson
 August 14 ~ Brad & Elizabeth Prange
 August 21 ~ Brad & Elizabeth Prange
 August 28 ~ Jan Barbo & John Baldwin

Lay Readers

August 07 ~ Ian Pope
 August 14 ~ Dwayne Weber
 August 21 ~ Carolyn Hanson
 August 28 ~ Ronn Kotsmith

Acolytes

August 07 ~ William Sonpon
 August 14 ~ Ella Prange
 August 21 ~ Comfort Sonpon
 August 28 ~ William Sonpon

Are YOU Ready to Serve?

One of the current priorities of the Ad Council is to reinstate the Nominating Committee which had dissolved over the past couple years due to the pandemic.

During the last couple of months, a plan has been set in place and soon the Nominating Committee will gather to identify possible volunteers for our committees. As fall approaches, someone from the Nominating Committee may be contacting you to serve. We will post the names of the Nominating Committee in an upcoming newsletter.

To you current committee members, many of you may have served the standard three years but will be asked to remain on your committee as we get on track with the protocol of replacing only part of the committee each year.

To all of you committee members, thank you for your willingness to serve your church.

Special Music for July

July 31 - Rebekah signing to
 "How Great Thou Art"

Special Music for August

August 7 - Jean Vincent
 "I'd Rather Have Jesus"

August 14 - Brad Prange and Kelly Landsverk
 "Loving My Jesus"

August 21 - Praise Band

August 28 - Pastor Greg

Meeting with Rev. Susan Nienaber

On July 13 Rev. Susan Nienaber, Director of Church Vitality for the Minnesota Conference, visited our church to provide an opportunity for the congregation to learn more about the current status of the UMC regarding the conflict over the question of human sexuality. The meeting was well attended by our congregation.

Rev. Nienaber provided a brief history of what has led up to the current schism within the UMC denomination. She then listened to comments from those in attendance and answered questions that had been submitted prior to the meeting. She highlighted 3 questions that most congregations ask:

- 1) Will a church be required to accept an LGBT pastor? The answer is no. The leadership team will work with the congregation to determine what would be best for their church and will not be obligated to accept an LGBT pastor.
- 2) Will a pastor be required to perform a same sex wedding ceremony if his/her theological belief is contrary to that marriage? The answer is no. Pastors will not be required to perform a same sex wedding ceremony.
- 3) Will a congregation have to allow for same sex marriage ceremonies to be held in their church? The answer is no. Congregations can work together to determine if they will or will not allow same sex marriage ceremonies to be held in their building.

Another question she addressed that has been asked within our congregations is “Why have we not voted whether to stay in the UMC or disaffiliate (leave) while other congregations have decided?” Susan provided 3 examples of why some churches have already voted:

- 1) A church in Barnum, MN has a congregation which is and has been, as a whole, traditional. They have known it is best for their congregation to disaffiliate and were able to vote.
- 2) A church in White Bear Lake, MN has a congregation which is not so traditional in their belief and knew they would stay within the UMC.
- 3) A church outside of Rice, MN is a church with a divided viewpoint on the issue at hand. They are a growing church, that serves a broad area and brings in many young families. Although they have differing views they have decided rather than have the issue be a catalyst for division, they would focus on who they are, what the mission of their church is and how best they can serve their community. They will also remain in the UMC at this time.

Each of these churches were able to come to a consensus of where they want to be. As noted in a recent letter sent to you, the leadership team of FAUMC was not able to determine if there was a clear path for our congregation at this time and a vote now would cause more harm than good. We are a church with various viewpoints and to avoid a division within our congregation felt it wiser to step back and take time while we identify who we are as a whole congregation, what our mission is and how we can best serve our community. We will be working with Rev. Nienaber to accomplish this. Please note she is also a licensed mediator and consultant so is well qualified to provide guidance on our journey. There will be more information sent out in the next few weeks on how the congregation will be invited to share in this process.

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Please note there were other questions/concerns submitted in the box that Rev. Nienaber did not have time to address. Those are under review and we plan to address them in future newsletters. They have not gone unheard.

If you have any questions or would like more details about this meeting, please contact Pastor Greg, Deb Jindra-Pope, Ad Council Chair or Jan Barbo, SPRC Chair.

Relay for Life

The 2022 Relay For Life of Rice County will take place on August 5th at the Rice County Fairgrounds in Faribault, MN.

Please join us as we celebrate 30 years of fighting cancer!

Schedule is as follows;

6 pm ~ Opening Ceremony and Survivor Lap

8:30 pm ~ Luminaria Lighting Service

5:00-8:00 pm ~ Luminaries for sale

6:00-9:00 pm ~ Musical acts on the Sellner Stage

~ Silent Auction

~ Red Cross Blood Mobile in the old Gymnastics Bldg.



YOUR Help is Needed!



Please consider a gift to Fourth Avenue UMC to help us keep our local bills current.

Our income is barely meeting our expenses.

Thank you for your support!

Kathy DuChene,
Church Treasurer



**Rural Evangelism Mission
Breakfast Fundraiser
Sunday, August 21
10:15 to noon
Fellowship Hall**



August Memory Verse

*"But if you refuse to serve the Lord,
then choose today whom you will serve.
Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served
beyond the Euphrates?
Or will it be the gods of the Amorites
in whose land you now live?
But as for me and my family,
we will serve the Lord."*
-Joshua 24:15

United Women In Faith Thursday, August 11, 2022 1:00 pm at Carolyn Minshall's Home YOU ARE INVITED!

Our next activity will be a salad luncheon at the home of Carolyn Minshall, 1208 Mitchell Drive, Faribault, MN. Mark your calendar for Thursday, August 11th at 1:00 pm. Please bring a salad to share with the group. Coffee, plates and tableware will be furnished.

RSVP to Carolyn at 507-332-8683. All women are welcome to attend this time of fun and fellowship!



United
Women
in Faith

Jesus Food Packing Event Saturday, August 6, 10 am - 12 noon at Faribo West Mall



Join us **Saturday, August 6, 10 am - 12 noon** at the Faribo West Mall to pack food for individuals in need.

Be a part of this fellowship and make a difference in many lives.

Please bring a friend to share in this meaningful experience.

Upcoming Worship Celebration

July 31 - Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

"Teach Us to Pray"

Pastor Greg Ciesluk preaching

A Note From the Hollings

We want to thank everyone for helping us celebrate our 72nd Anniversary. Also, a special thank you to Pastor Greg and Rebekah for all their work.

Lloyd & Alta Holling



Faribault Prays 24 Hour Prayer Walk Mark Your Calendar Sept 23, 3 pm - Sept 24, 3 pm

This event is in the planning stages. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Special Thanks to Kelly Landsverk

Kelly,

Thank you for organizing our "special music" for the summer. Many talented individuals have shared their gifts with us. The music has been inspirational and each week we look forward to what is coming next.

Our worship services have been blessed!

Thank you.

Love,
Kathy

Attendance

	In Person <u>Worship</u>	Online <u>Worship</u>
<u>July 24</u>	67	13
<u>July 24</u>	Offering	
Unified Budget	\$1,336.00	

Congratulations Grant and Lauri!

At the close of a recent worship service, the congregation congratulated **Grant and Lauri Lammin** on the occasion of their 20th wedding anniversary. The Lammins were united in marriage on July 18, 2002 in Grant's native England. Together, Grant and Lauri lead our media and sound ministry and you will find them **here** every Sunday carrying out their ministry from the sound booth. Be sure to take a moment or two to congratulate the Lammins.



Left: Grant and Lauri on their wedding day, July 18, 2002



Right: Grant and Lauri celebrating in Duluth on July 18, 2022

Meals On Wheels

Fourth Avenue UMC is scheduled to assist with Meals on Wheels deliveries the first two weeks in August. **It is Monday through Friday August 1-5 and also August 8-12.**

We have one route for those two weeks and we need drivers willing to bring meals to shut-ins in our community.

The delivery times are M-F from 10:30 am to noon.

Please call Shari VanDerVeen at 507-491-6570 to volunteer or if you have questions. Thank you!!

Website:

www.fourthaveumc.org

Like us on Facebook

Servants Wanted To Enhance Church Communications

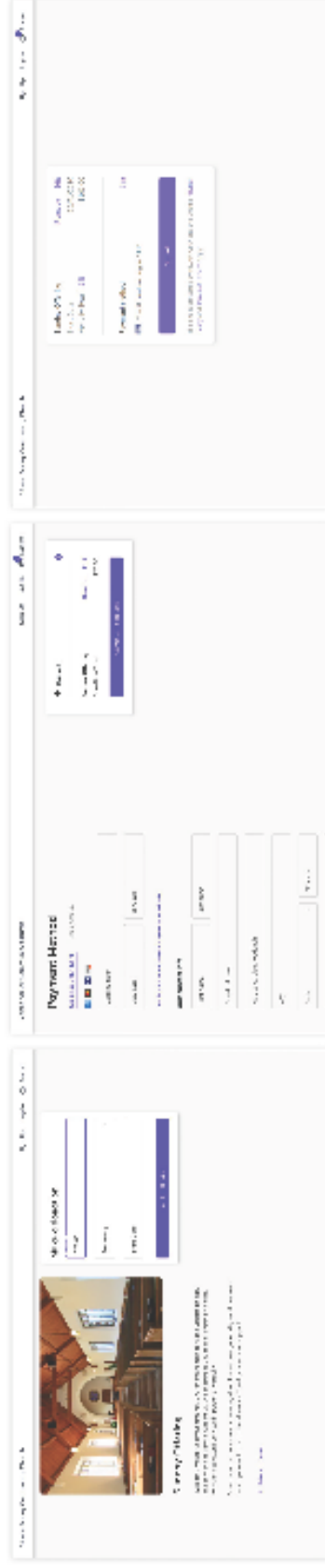
Do you like to take pictures on your phone? We are looking for a person or two who would take pictures of the church at worship, fellowship, and activities and submit them to the church office so we can pepper our weekly communications with signs of the life that is stirring among us.

Do you have a way with words and enjoy writing? We are looking for people who would like to write about the good things that have happened or are happening in our church and community. The mission of Christ is greatly impacted by the way we use our words to tell God's story.

If you would like to serve in these ways, speak to Pastor Greg or Kathy DuChene.

HOW TO USE VANCO ONLINE

Support seasonal and year-round missions, make one-time gifts or set up recurring donations online.



The first screenshot shows the 'Select Your Funds and Amount' page with a 'Donate' button. The second screenshot shows the 'Enter Payment Method' page with fields for credit card information. The third screenshot shows the 'Complete Your Donation' page with a 'Submit' button.

1 Select Your Funds and Amount

Select your fund and click the **Donate** button. Next, choose a donation amount and frequency, then proceed to payment.

2 Enter Payment Method

Enter your credit card, debit card or bank account information. Sign up for an account to save your information for future donations.

3 Complete Your Donation

Review and complete your gift by clicking **Submit**.

Vanco Online Account Features

From your Vanco Online account, you can review your giving history, manage recurring donations and update payment information.



VANCO
FAITH

**Fourth Avenue United
Methodist Church
219 4th Ave NW
Faribault, MN
55021-5170**

♦ **Sunday Worship 9:00 AM**

Join us at 2:42 PM daily as we pray our church's Breakthrough Prayer.

Pastor Greg Ciesluk

Phone: 218-310-8813

Pastorgreg.fourthaveumc@gmail.com

Office Email:

fourthaveumcoffice@gmail.com

Phone: 507-334-4308

Office Hours: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Tuesday thru Thursday

Staff:

Choir Director: Kelly Landsverk

Organ/Accompanist: Doug Madow

Nursery Attendant: Kim Luedke

Custodian: Ken Harren

Secretary: Sue Allen

Office Volunteer: Kathy DuChene

Tech Volunteers: Grant & Lauri Lammin



Our Church's Breakthrough Prayer

O God, our God, we praise and magnify Your Name!

Great are You, Lord, and greatly to be praised

With you, all things are possible.

We know that you are *with* us and *for* us

and Your plans are for our good,

for a future and a hope.

Breakthrough into our lives and into our church.

Stir up afresh our faith.

Set our hearts aflame with the fire of your love.

Open our eyes to new, fresh possibilities
and fill us anew with the power of your Spirit.

Usher us into a new season of faithfulness
and fruitfulness for your Kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.